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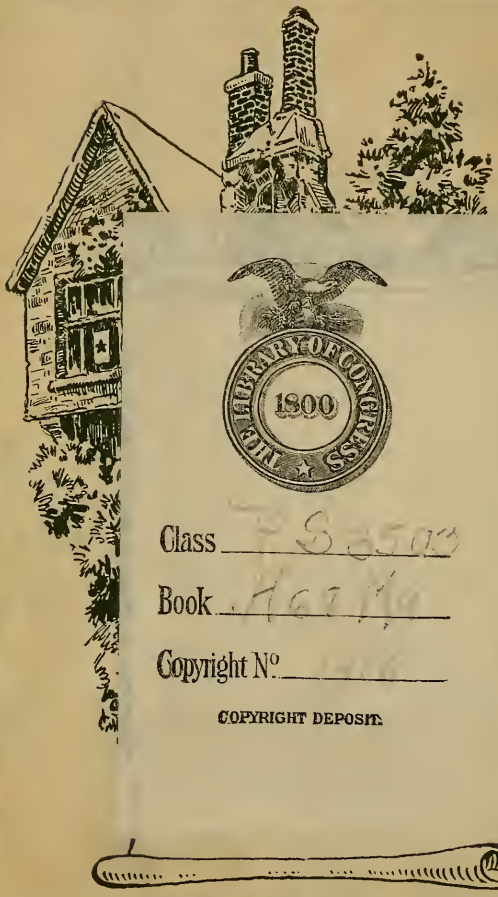
MY FLAG *and* MY BOY

And Other War Poems

By WILLIAM H. BARTER



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MY FLAG AND MY BOY

AND OTHER WAR POEMS

"This Dear Old Flag of Mine"

(*See page 1*)

My Flag
and
My Boy

And Other War Poems

By

WILLIAM H. BARTER, LL.B.

Illustrated

THE PAGE COMPANY
BOSTON MDCCCCXVIII

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To the American Mothers

Whose sympathies go out to the mothers of other lands
and who gave their sons in the service of their
country to the end, that the flag that they
love and cherish shall continue to fly
o'er the land of the free and shall
be the beacon light of love and
faith for all humanity, I
respectfully dedicate
this volume.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE HOUSE BOSTON

Lieutenant William H. Barter, a member of the staff of the Governor, has written this book of poems upon subjects connected with the War. He has dedicated it to The American Mother, who surely has a place in this War even as conspicuous as that she holds in peace. More than any other she feels the sending of a boy to the front to fight in the cause of freedom.

There is very much of good in this little book, expressive of the great patriotism of the time and of the sacrifices that are made both by our soldiers and sailors and by their mothers.

The verses indicate the author's keen sense of wit and humor, and above all it is apparent that they could only have been written by one who served his state and nation with the boys in the ranks and with the blessings and guidance of a Loving Mother.

Samuel W. McCall

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MY FLAG AND MY BOY
AND
OTHER WAR POEMS

My Flag and My Boy

My boy has gone to the war today,
I've sent him this very morn,
And I've hung this dear old flag of mine
For him, my own first-born.
I've mended it here and I've patched it there
And I've added full many a star.
My flag will fly till my boy comes home,
Till my boy comes home from the war.

In its red I can see the flush on his cheek
As we kissed and he marched away.
I can see in its white his soul so bright,
As bright as the dawn of the day.
I can see in its blue his eyes so true,
And the whole is our guiding star.
I'll fly that flag till my boy comes home,
Till my boy comes home from the war.

I have a flag, and I have a boy,
And I live in the land of the free,
I've something to give that Freedom may live,
That something is quite all to me.
My boy may be gone for many a day,
'Way off in the old land afar,
But I'll fly my flag till my boy comes home,
Till my boy comes home from the war.

"Twinkle, Brilliant Service Star"

Twinkle, Brilliant Service Star

Twinkle, brilliant Service Star,
We know who you're twinkling for,
We know why your lustre bright
Twinkles through the long, clear night.

Twinkle, twinkle, Service Star,
We know whose your orbits are,
God will keep your shining light
Even through the long, dark night.

Twinkle, brilliant Service Star,
Shine for him in time of war,
Star of love, for him away
Shine into our hearts today.

"The House with the Lonely Star"

The Service Flag

Will you give a thought, when passing by
  The home where his loved ones are?
Will you murmur a prayer, as you wend your way
  By the house with the lonely star?

Will you help him along with a cheery song?
  Then send a line off to the war,
And just let him know that there's warmth and glow
  In the house with the lonely star.

Don't let him worry and don't let him fret!
  Call in, keep the front door ajar,
Bring them a good word, don't ever forget
  There's a house with a lonely star!

By a star, we are told, in the days of old
  A Saviour was found, from afar.
There may be a manger quite hidden away
  In the house with the lonely star.

"With His Best Little Mother at Home"

Three Little Mothers and Three Soldier Boys

Three great big soldier boys, just before rest,
  Talked of their mothers at home;
Each little mother they thought was the best,
  Each little mother at home.

My mother cares for me ever so much,
  My mother loves me alone,
My mother prays God to keep me in touch,
  Three little mothers at home.

One great big soldier boy sent back from France,
  Away from his friends o'er the foam,
Her prayer had been answered, God gave him a chance
  With his best little mother at home.

Another big soldier boy, still in his teens,
Lay on the ground quite alone,
Save for a woman who wore a Red Cross,
Like his best little mother at home.

The other big soldier boy went to his rest,
Died for the sake of his own
Dear little mother and the flag he loved best,
Sweet little mother at home.

"That's My Boy"

Rain and sleet a-falling down,
Crowds along the street,
All astir in Boston Town,
Sounds of tramping feet.
Soldiers marching off to war,
On with steady tread,
Packed and armed for "over there,"
Eyes front straight ahead.

Woman standing midst the throng,
Tired and old and gray,
Pushed and jostled, waiting long,
Waiting, cold, all day.
Points a finger through the crowd,
Face aflame with joy,
Shouting valiantly aloud,
"THAT'S MY BOY."

Newsies running through the street,
War news fills the air.
Victory blazed on every sheet,
Victory "over there."
Woman reads and breathes a prayer,
A name, then cries for joy,
"Jim has won a *Croix De Guerre!*
THAT'S MY BOY."

"That's My Boy"

Postman bringing letters home
Filled with love and cheer.
Words from loved ones o'er the foam,
News from "over there."
Woman reads her Jim has gone.
Same old smile of joy,
Broken heart, but smiling on,
"THAT'S MY BOY."

"The Lassie Smiled"

The Lass of Lonelyland

A wee little lass out in Lonelyland
  Sighed in her loneliness,
Her love and joy, her brave soldier boy,
  Had gone to the land of distress.

A little song bird, resting quite near,
  Touched by the wail of the child,
Said, "I have wings, I'll fly and I'll sing
  Of your love," and the lassie smiled.

"And I'll bear him your message, and watch through the night,
  And I'll show him the way back to you,
Then all will be glad here in Lonelyland,
  And then the dark skies will be blue."

The soldiers all said that a song bird one day
  Came down through the trench to a boy,
And it hovered above while it sang songs of love,
  And the lad's face beamed with joy.

But then came the drive, and in No Man's Land,
  Over the top, toward Lorraine,
He made his last stand, and clenched in his hand
  Was a bird that had sung its last strain.

'Twas a song that brought courage to one soldier lad,
A word from his lassie alone,
A word of her love with an echo of prayer,
So he died with a message from home.

If you have a laddie that's fighting for you,
A message of love you must send,
Don't let him wait till it's almost too late,
And fill it with love to the end.

This war will soon cease, and the song bird of Peace
Will fly o'er the freed of the land;
Some will be glad and some will be sad,
With the lass of the Lonelyland.

The Lass of Lonelyland

(Song written to accompany the preceding poem)

A little lass in Lonelyland
Longed for her soldier lad,
Longed for the day when he'd come back to her,
This little lass was sad.
She sent him away from Lonelyland
At the close of a summer day.
When home fires burn bright through Lonelyland's night,
This lassie is heard to say:

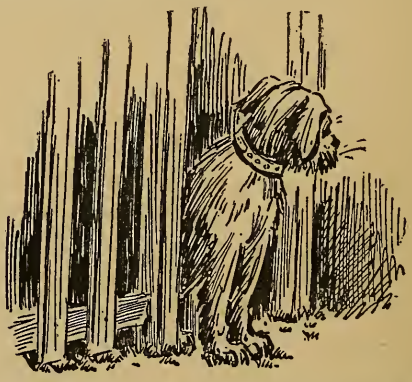
"Soldier Boy, Soldier Boy,
Are you coming back to me?
I'm watching and waiting and praying for you,
That God may keep watch over thee.
Soldier Boy, Soldier Boy,
Fighting for liberty,
I'm always a' yearning for your safe returning
To Lonelyland safe here with me."

This little lass in Lonelyland
Waits still and prays all the day.
Her brave soldier boy fell fighting for her
And the flag of the land of the free.
This war will soon cease, and the song bird of Peace
Will fly o'er the freed of the land,
And some will be glad, but some will be sad
With my lass of the Lonelyland.

My Little Boy Bill in O. D.

Note. O. D. is the army abbreviation for Olive Drab, the official color of the field service uniform of the United States Army.

I just ran across your old marble rack
And things so familiar to me,
A few of your tops tied up in a sack,
My little boy Bill in O. D.
Your ball and your bat and your old catching glove,
And a block marked with A, B and C,
Strange, but they all seemed to whisper of love
For my little boy Bill in O. D.

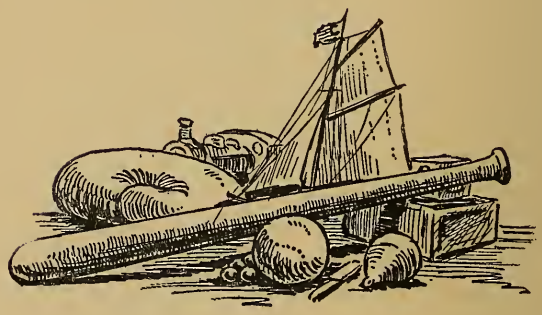


Just spoke to Rover, won't play much of late,
Won't take any notice of me,
Watches all day by the old garden gate
For our little boy Bill in O. D.;
Seems to say, "No, I won't go to the mill,
I'm just goin' to stick round and see
If the next one along ain't our little boy Bill,
Our little boy Bill in O. D."

Just ran across that young girlie next door,
Guess I've been deaf, and can't see,
Strange, but I never had noticed before
My little boy Bill in O. D.
She asked just for you, and I know 'twas a sigh,
And then, bless my soul, I could see
A wee little tear, and now I know why,
You little boy Bill in O. D.

Strange that I never had seen you grow up,
You're still just a kiddie to me,
It's only a day since I played "buck and buck"
With my little boy Bill in O. D.
Don't you remember we wrestled, my lad,
And I threw you right over my knee?
Or, were you just fooling your sleepy old dad?
My little boy Bill in O. D.

I guess I know now why they called you that night
And why they just passed right by me,
They wanted a feller to go out and fight,
So they took you, my boy in O. D.
Now, you do your bit, son; but, sonny, take care,
If they get you, they'll surely get me.
I'm proud of my baby boy fighting out there,
My little boy Bill in O. D.



Plain Talk from a Doughboy

There's a bit of a punch in a Yankee lad,
And it's coming, O Fritz, to you,
A bit of a crack with an awful whack
That gets a guy in the small of his back.
There's a bit of a kick in a Dixie boy,
Like the bump from the heel of a mule;
And an awful slam like the buck of a ram,
And it's coming, Old Fritzie fool.

There's a bit of a clout in a Yankee punch,
And it lands in the square of the jowl,
And a bit of a welt that lands plumb in the belt,
And it makes just a bit of a howl.
There's a bit of a bolt in a Dixie jolt
Like the plunk of a tough boomerang,
There's a bit of a party, Fritz, coming to you,
And it's going to come with a bang.

There's a bit of a wallop in the hand of a Yank
That'll help you to go fast asleep,
And when you wake up there's a clean uppercut,
That'll put you in dreamland for keep.
There's a bit of a place on a German's jaw
That's reached with a sweet Dixie jab,
And a Yankee push that will land in your smush,
And stop all your fake peace gab.

"There's a Bit of a Punch in a Yankee Lad"

A story is told, in the Book of Old,
Of a tough old jawbone of an ass,
And David smote, with a sling, they wrote,
Till Goliath was laid on the grass.
There never was bone as hard as the fist
Of a bean-fed Yankee Doodle,
So, you rotten old lout, you'd better look out
For your nobody-home German noodle.

There's many a hound that's taken the count
By a punch on the point of a snoot,
So, Fritzie, my boy, it's coming, oh joy,
You're a mighty sick German galoot.
That punch never lands but it lands with a might,
And it never was sent except for the right,
So, Fritzie, old sausage, you're in for a fight,
You had better sit tight, Good night, GOOD NIGHT,
YOU'RE IN FOR A HELL OF A FIGHT, GOOD NIGHT!

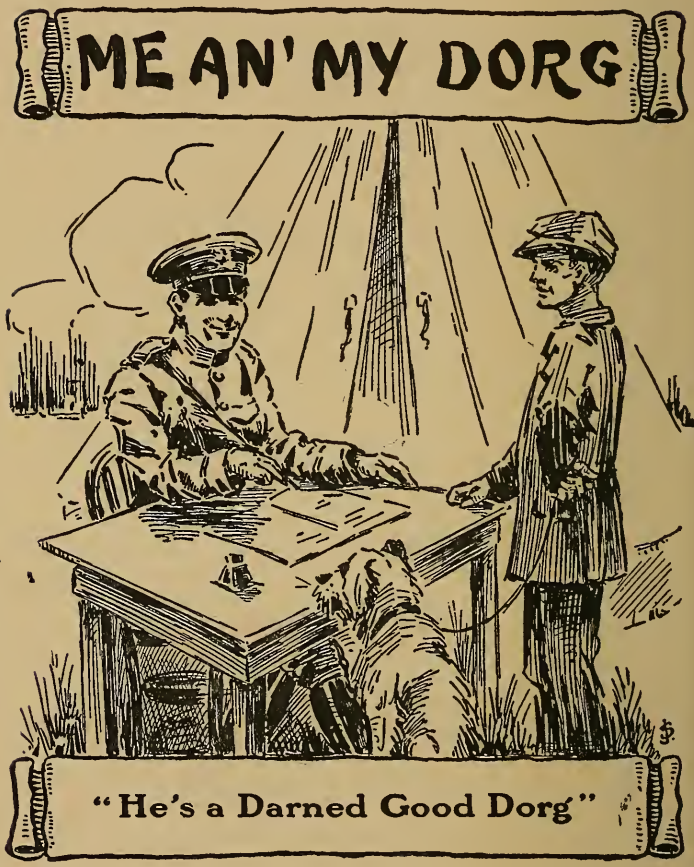
"I Have Not Forgotten, Soldier Boy"

I Have Not Forgotten, Soldier Boy

I've greeted you at morning when the day is at its dawning,
I've held you near me all the whole day through,
And I've greeted you at night when the white stars twinkle bright,
I'm always, always, always greeting you.

I've loved you in the morning when the day is at its dawning,
When the robin sings its dearest, sweetest song;
I've loved you through the darkness, when the skies above are starless,
I'm always loving you, the whole night long.

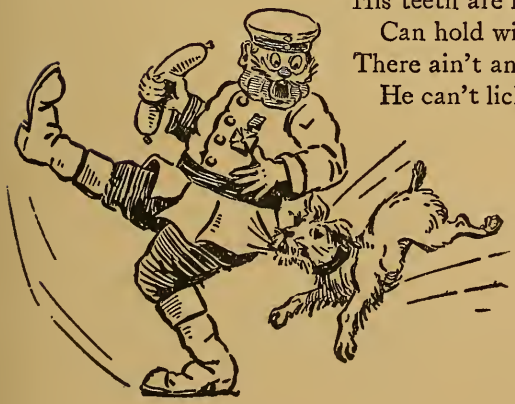
I want you in the morning when the day is at its dawning,
When the bluebird sips the freshness of the dew;
I want you soon returning, when the light of peace is burning,
I'm always, always, always wanting you.



"He's a Darned Good Dorg"

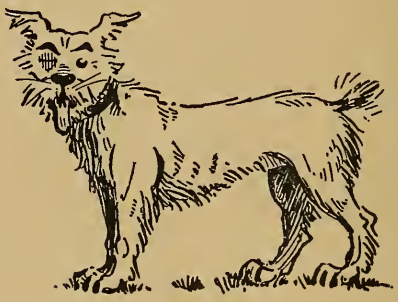
Me an' My Dorg

My dorg here's a scrapper
An' gosh he can fight,
Can lick any purp
On our street, honor bright.



His teeth are like bolos,
Can hold with a grip, say
There ain't any dorg of a Hun
He can't lick.

One eye is bulged out, Cap,
An' one is bulged in.
But he's a darned good dorg
For the shape he's in.



An' he's sore on the Germans;
He can smell out a spy.
He'll make some rookie, Cap,
He's a regular guy.

He snarls at a pretzel,
An' as fer limburger cheese,
He just turns down his tail
An' walks off, if you please.

As fer cooties, oh boy, Cap,
He's seasoned for them.
He's caught more blamed cooties
Than a million of men.

There's a butcher, a German,
What lives in our street,
An' his dorg disappeared,
Should have stayed on his beat.

His dorg was a daschund,
Low down, like a bug.
Looked like a squat louse
Borned under a rug.

That dorg ain't no more, Cap,
He's gone, sure as fate,
An' my Deadeye's been lickin'
His chops more of late.

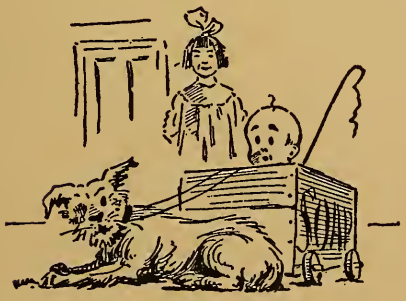
He'd wipe out a trench
Full of rats in a day.
He's a good old scout, Cap,
Can he come? Whatcher say?

You don't want my dorg, Cap?
He can't enlist, too?
Well, it's good-bye, old Deadeye
It's good-night for you.

It's tough luck, old Deadeye,
It's goin' to be hard.
It's me for the Army—
For you, the Home Guard.

But stay away from the butcher
What keeps on our street;
I been always s'picious
Of his sausage meat.

An' watch out for the old folks
An' kiddies at play;
An' just chase those damned
German measles away.



An' if I get hooked, dorg,
I won't be much missed
'Cept by you, my old Deadeye,
What tried to enlist.

So, buck up, old dorg pal,
Your paw here, I say;
I may come back smiling
To my Deadeye some day.

"Since My Jimmie Joined the Marines"

My son Jimmie would have his own way,
Could lick any man in the world, he would say.
So he went into training, ran round all day,
Three months skipped a rope, and gave up drinking tay.

The night of the fight Jimmie looked fit and fine,
With green tights and a flag where he wore his waist line.
He was matched with a dago, named Tony Bucci,
A mean-looking skin of a wop, sure was he.

Well, it's a very sad story for a father to tell;
That dago hit Jimmie so Jimmie can't smell.
Three months of training, and the pride of a pop
Gone with a clout on the snoot by a wop!

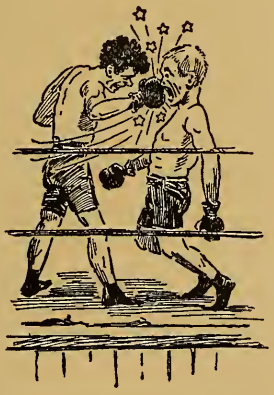
I took Jimmie home, and, say, I walloped him.
He made me see stars, with a welt on my chin.
The nurse gives him brandy to moisten his palate,
He had on gloves, but I had a mallet.

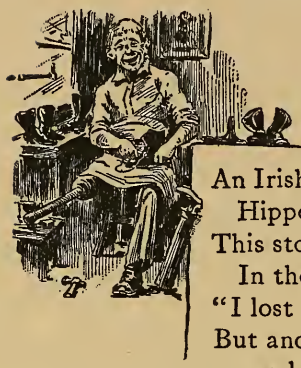
'Twas an awful disgrace that he brought on my head,
I would rather be deep in me grave layin' dead!
Or roam the world over, with nary a penny,
Than to have my son James laid low by a Ginney.

"His Bunkie's the Dago"

But that's long ago, now I'm proud of my boy.
Now he's a hero, me pride and me joy,
He's joined the marines and he's fighting the Hun,
And his bunkie's the dago, the son-of-a-gun.

The Irish and English surely can fight,
The Canadians can care for themselves all right,
The Australians and Scotch can go some, says Jimmie,
But when it comes to a clout, kape your eye on a Ginney.





Hippety, Hippety Hop

An Irishman once with a wooden leg,
Hippety, Hippety Hop,
This story told as he sat on a keg
In the back of an old cobbler shop.
"I lost me leg on the muddy Marne,
But another I made from the door of a barn."
So he sang his song and he told this yarn,
HIPPETY, HIPPETY HOP.

"I heard thim say 'over,' and over I wint,
Hippety, Hippety Hop.
As any good soldier will go where he's sint,
Hippety, Hippety Hop.
I was knocked in the air by a big bomb shell
And I landed square where the Germans dwell;
I thought to the divil I landed in,—well
HIPPETY, HIPPETY HOP.

"They thought I was dead, so they left me alone,
Hippety, Hippety Hop.
With many a kick on me crazy bone,
Hippety, Hippety Hop.
But I lay quite still and unscrewed me leg,
And made a swipe with the wooden peg
And knocked forty Huns—well, thirty-nine—dead,
HIPPETY, HIPPETY HOP.

"How did I get back, I hopped for a pace,
Hippety, Hippety Hop.
Well, now, never mind, stranger things have took place,
Hippety, Hippety Hop.
If you did your share and was down by the Marne,
You could see what is left of the door of the barn,
And see forty—well, thirty-nine—Huns safe from harm,
HIPPETY, HIPPETY HOP.

"So that's me story, and here I am,
Hippety, Hippety Hop.
If yez doubt me word I don't give a d——,
Hippety, Hippety Hop.
They got me gun and they got me leg,
But I made them squeal and I made them beg,
And I've still got a kick in me old wooden peg,
HIPPETY, HIPPETY HOP."

"The Stew is on the Blink"

"Out O' Luck"

When the grub is kind o' soggy
And the stew is on the blink,
And the coffee dumped into your can
Goes in the kitchen sink,
And the belly robber's robbing
And you feel your gettin' stuck,
There ain't no use complaining, Bill,
You're simply "Out o' Luck."

When the corpril kicks and hollers
And the Top is mad as hell
And the Shave Tail starts a stewing
And the Old Boy starts to yell
And the Major's jumpin' in the air
And the K. O. runs amuck,
You better just keep out o' sight,
If you don't, yer "Out o' Luck."

When on the hike and yer bloomin' pack
Feels like it weighs a ton,
And the mud keeps clingin to yer shoes,
And yer know you're almost done,
Just whistle "I'm In De Army Now,"
Or "Watch the Kaiser Duck,"
You've got no kick a'coming, boy,
You're simply "Out o' Luck."

When yer hear the bullets whizzin'
  And yer get a bad old break,
And a shrapnel bomb, it hits yer
  Till yer feel like hamburg steak,
Dey ain't no use in whimperin,' son,
  Just grin and show yer pluck,
Yer a poor old rumpin' raw recruit
  That's just been "Out o' Luck."

Key to Army Lingo

Out o' Luck: Any misfortune that comes to a soldier.
Belly Robber: The Cook.
The Top: First Sergeant.
Shave Tail: Second Lieutenant.
Old Boy: The Captain.
K. O.: The Colonel.

The Soldier Boy's Homecoming

When the dawn comes to the trenches,
And the light is breaking through,
And I'm feeling kind of tired and weary, too;
There's a something keeps me cheery,
It's the light of love, my deary,
The light that sends me wandering back to you.

When I'm standing post at darkness,
Listening all the dreary night,
Watching shadows still, way out on No Man's Land,
Some one seems to be quite near me
With a hand on mine to cheer me,
It's my mother's hand, I know and understand.

When the sly old moon comes, deary.
It makes me, oh, so cheery,
For I know the same old moon is your moon, too;
And the stars that shine above me
Whisper words from one who loves me
Mother words of love, your love so true.

Don't you worry, mother deary,
Just smile a-while, be cheery.
Keep your trust pinned on the old red, white and blue.
And when the day is in its making
And the dawn of peace is breaking,
Your soldier boy is coming home to you.

HOME

Fifty Years of Elkdom

Poem written to commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the birth of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

Back in the days when the clouds were a-hanging,
And men were as strangers adrift in the mist,
Wandering aimlessly, each as though sightless,
Groping about in a world's wilderness.

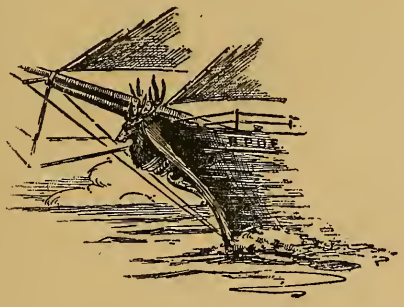
A barque then was builded and moulded for goodness
To sail o'er the sea of Humanity's tide,
To leave ports of strangelands and sail safe to kindlands
To weave hearts and homes so that love might abide.

A form on the ship's prow, that came from the forests,
The head of an Elk with its antlers spread far,
A flag at its masthead, that flag called Old Glory,
The ship sailed for justice, sailed out o'er the bar.

"So May The Ship Sail, and May It Sail Onward"

The ports were made safely by the light of the Nazarene,
And men were united and creeds were made one,
And homes were made brighter and hearts were made
lighter,
And strangers made brothers and brothers made one.

So may the ship sail, and may it sail onward,
And may it sail on to our ones o'er the sea,
And with its great message give strength to our Pershing
And bring back our loved ones to you and to me.



"Beyond the Rio Grande"

The Day of the Soldier Boy

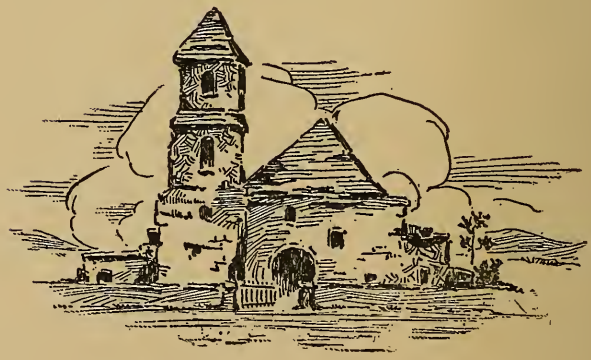
Written while with the United States Troops on the Mexican Border during the Summer of 1916. The river referred to is the Rio Grande, the word "spick," next to the last line, is the nickname given by the United States Army boys to the Mexicans.

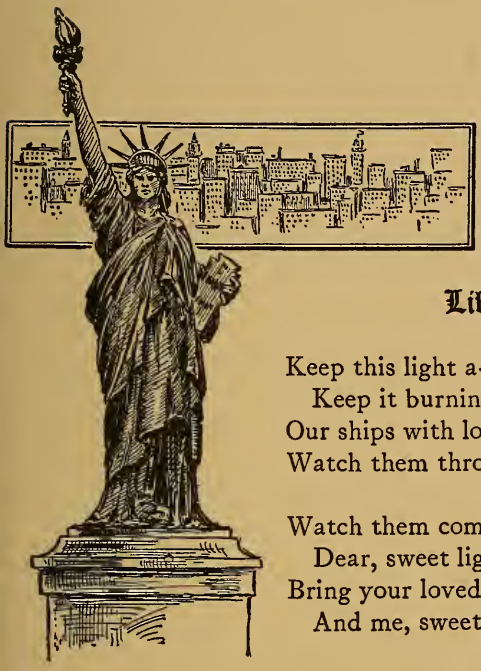
When it's morning on the border, and the sun is breaking through,
And the sands begin to glisten like the good old home town dew,
I look across the river, and it makes me kind of blue,
When it's morning on the border, Love, my thoughts go back to you.

When the sun is in the heavens and the air is mighty hot,
And it's hard to breathe and stifling, and my throat is dry as rot,
I've got to grin and bear it. I've got to see it through,
To make the burden lighter, Love, my thoughts go back to you.

When the sun has passed the border, and the afterglow is red,
And the silver moon comes shining o'er the silent desert bed,
I'm feeling kind of lonely like. I know you're lonely, too,
When the sun has passed the border, Love, my thoughts go back to you.

When the greaser stops his sniping and skulking in the sand,
When the raider hies himself away beyond the Rio Grande,
And the "spick" doffs his sombrero to the old red, white and blue,
And its calm along the border, Love, THEN I'LL COME BACK TO YOU.





Liberty

Keep this light a-burning,
  Keep it burning bright,
Our ships with love returning
Watch them through the night.

Watch them coming in from sea,
  Dear, sweet light of liberty.
Bring your loved ones home to thee
  And me, sweet light of liberty.

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